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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY	Poland	REPORT	
SUBJECT	Skolwin Paper Factory in Skolwin	DATE DISTR.	20 June 1955
		NO. OF PAGES	50X1-HUM
DATE OF INFO.		REQUIREMENT NO.	RD
PLACE ACQUIRED		REFERENCES	50X1-HUM

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(FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

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1. The Skolwin Paper Factory is located in Skolwin (Odermuende, N 53-31, E 14-36) and is situated along an avenue, the western side of which is dotted with rows of buildings; the factory warehouses are on the eastern side. It was formerly owned by Feldmuehle AG, which presently operates a paper factory near Hanover. At the close of the war Feldmuehle AG left all of its eight paper machines at Skolwin; hence production was not interrupted at first. However, the Russians soon dismantled the equipment and shipped it to Russia. The dismantling was carelessly done. It resulted in considerable damage to the buildings, and the factory was inoperative for some time.

2. The Polish regime is now zealously reconstructing the factory. With huge sums of money invested, the factory is planned to become the most productive of its kind in Europe. One portion of the reconstruction plan is already completed. There are now two new machines, both from the firm Voigt in Heidenheim,[1] the electrical parts for one being from AEG, the other from Siemens-Schuckert. These machines are the basis of current production and are referred to hereafter as Machine I and Machine II.

3. Machine II is 4 m. wide and Machine I, the newest, is 6 m. wide with a capacity of producing 500 m. of paper a minute. The theoretical capacity of both machines has never been tested for lack of sufficient quantities of raw material. Thus Machine I produced only 250 m. a minute and Machine II, 160 to 200 m., with a scheduled production of 300 m.. The shortage of raw materials was and still is due to the lack of timber products. Lately, two new timber grinding machines were put into operation and another two are about to be completed. Altogether, 8 grinding machines are scheduled to be mounted, all to be provided by the firm Poelten, which is or was a branch of Voigt in Austria.

4. The machines are operated with a multiple-engine device (Mehrmotorenantrieb). Machine II has one common generator for which there is one 6 KV motor. Machine I has 5 synchronized motors, 6 KV, with the required generators for the separate groups. The power capacity of Machine I is 1500 KW.

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(NOTE: Washington distribution indicated by "X"; Field distribution by "#".)

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5. The factory was formerly equipped with a voltage scheme of 20 KV which has now been raised to 110 KV drawn from a power line leading from Warsaw via Poznan and Stargard through Pomerania to the factory. This was opened to the factory in June 1954. It was necessary to utilize this source since the power station at Szczecin (Stettin) was too weak, though it is being presently enlarged and strengthened by the firm Elin of Vienna and Turbinenbau of Austria, as well as by Hungarian firms. A new turbine was recently installed, but owing to an inaccuracy in the technical handling, it broke down, causing a three- to-four-week delay.

6. When the 110-KV line was completed last year, the factory put into operation large transformers built by Polish firms which regulate the supply from 110 KV to 6 KV. From the 6 KV source, the current is switched to the separate recipients. Polish transformers are available to switch 6 KV into 220 to 380 volts. There are two transformers of Polish origin available for Machine I; namely, 800 KVA and 650 KVA. These transformers in no way compare with German equipment.

7. With the two machines already mounted, the factory continues to be enlarged with talk of a third machine to be mounted shortly. [redacted] 50X1-HUM

[redacted] The mounting is planned for August 1954. Polish engineers have revealed that it is planned to switch Machine II to production of fine paper, whereas Machine I will produce newsprint paper. It is as yet unknown what Machine III will produce.

8. Owing to the vast sums of money already expended on the factory, the Poles are eager to get it on a profit-making basis as soon as possible. They anticipate it will be a first-rate profitable export factory. Since they are behind in their original plans, continuous operation has been recently ordered for Machine I to handle export orders. There are numerous orders [redacted] for 50X1-HUM products from the factory. With the biggest production capacity of its kind in Europe, the Poles can hope to compete successfully on the international market. 50X1-HUM The machines now mounted in Szczecin are described [redacted] as unquestionably the latest in Europe. [redacted] Total costs for Machine I are assessed at 10 million dollars calculated at a rate of 10 to 1. The Poles assess the costs at 100 million zlotys. 50X1-HUM

9. Machine I, because of its unusual length of 6 m., with a paper width of 5880 mm., is not only the largest in Europe, but because of its motor-precision schemes that assure synchronization of multiple phases without damage to the paper, it is the object of competition with AEG and Siemens. It is, however, not a secret patent. In case of breakdowns in Machine I, a spare part for every item is on hand, with fuses ordered in whole sets. It is not known whether this applies to Machine II, which was supplied by AEG (sic).

10. The working process of the machine is as follows: Timber and cellulose first come to the mixing and pressure pumps which push the material upward. From there it goes to the drums with thin slices for the removal of timber residue. Next is the sieve process: on rubber rollers the material passes on to an exhaustion cylinder with holes in it which creates a vacuum, thus absorbing water from the material. From there the material goes to the first press where it is pressed and adjusted to the proper weight of 50 to 60 gramme per 1 m^2. The second press is the so-called "felt-less press" because felt is not used here for the conveying of the paper. Next comes the drying phase, resulting in white paper. The drying process is achieved with the help of 12 cylinders, each 6 m. wide, with a diameter of 1.5 m. There are 4 drying phases, the last being accomplished by 14 cylinders of which 2 are cooling cylinders. Finally the material undergoes the smoothing process and is then passed on rollers to be wound up. The secret of this machine lies in the precision of the 5 synchronized motors which allow the paper to pass through all these phases without even tearing.

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11. Timber is available in sufficient quantities in Poland. On the banks of the Oder River ample supplies are available. Normal timber of a length of 1½ m. is used. But while the timber is available, the problem is to prepare it in sufficient quantities for production. For example, Machine I can presently work only 4 to 5 hours as there are not sufficient grinding machines for the timber. With 4 existing grinders, 4 remain to be mounted.

12. Cellulose is believed to be imported from an unknown source, 2 to 3 wagonloads a day arrive at the plant. It is stored in a large "cellulose building" about 50 m. long and 30 m. wide which is wholly packed with cellulose to a height of 2m.

13. The power station at the factory which was completely dismantled is being reconstructed to permit operation of scheduled Machines III and IV. As soon as the export business gets under way profits will be used for the purchase of Machine IV from Voigt, in which case Siemens will again supply the engines.

14. The factory premises are strongly guarded by factory police armed with carbines. The police, a third of whom are women, are on duty day and night. Guards are outside and inside the factory watching every building. No one can enter the factory without a pass. In one instance the head of the police in Szczecin was refused entrance when he wished to talk to the installation engineers about their visas. When the last machine was put into operation no one except the workers was allowed to be present.

15. The factory employs between 400 and 500 workers and administrative employees. Work is carried on in three consecutive shifts, without interruption, on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. Both men and women are employed. Average wages are 700 to 800 zlotys a month. Women make a little less, namely 600 to 700 a month. Best paid are electricians at a rate of 1,000 to 1,500 or more a month. Directors and Party functionaries earn 2,000 a month. One might assume from the working hours that production rates are high, but this is not the case. A large portion of working time is devoted to maintenance and repair, and in the past, to the mounting of the machines. But even now Machine II, for example, has more breakdown than production hours. There are always deficiencies in the repair of the water pipes or steam tubes which, when they break down, are mended haphazardly. The reason for this is the carelessness of the workers who, owing to the speed system, feel little responsibility for the machinery. Some workers wished to leave Machine I because the irregular production made it impossible to earn much money.

16. The technical personnel are in certain respects no better than the ordinary laborer in Germany. Fifty percent seem to have received good training, but since they are forced to work under the speed system, efficiency suffers. At present the Polish personnel would scarcely be able to man the machines themselves. Though Machine I is attended by 5 Polish engineers who are supposed to be experts, still when there is a breakdown, they require the assistance of Germans. This applies in particular to complicated electrical equipment. Machine II, which is less complicated, appears to be within their capabilities.

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1. Comment: Possibly the firm J.M. Voith G.m.b.H., Maschinenfabrik, Werk Heidenheim (Brenz).